

Message Text

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S E C R E T AMMAN 6382

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FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652 XGDS-3

TAGS/ PFOR, MASS, JO, US

SUBJECT: HAWK MISSILES

REF (A) AMMAN 6356, (B) STATE 225084

1. KING IS STILL IN AQABA AND REACHABLE ONLY BY PHONE. WAS ABLE TO REACH RIFAI AT ABOUT 01:30 LOCAL AT HOME AND CONVEY TO HIM PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE FOR HIS MAJESTY(REF B) AT THAT TIME. HE INDICATED THAT HE WOULD TAKE CARE OF FORWARDING IT ON IT VIEJA OF FACT KING IS OUT OF TOWN. HE THANKED ME FOR THE MESZAGE AND THE EXPRESSIONS OF APPRECIATION FOR KING AND UNDERSTANDING FOR JORDAN'S POSITION IT CONTAINED.

2. I THEN TOLD HIM THAT WE WANTED HIM TO KNOW AGAIN THAT AS I HAD MADE CLEAR TO HIM EARLIER IN THE DAY, WE HAD ADHERED COMPLETELY TO THE PLAN WHICH HAD BEEN SET OUT FOR HIM IN SECRETARY'S MESSAGE AND TO WHICH HE HAD AGREED. WE CONSIDERED WHAT WE HAD TO SAY THE MINIMUM AMOUNT CONSISTENT WITH NOT STARTING UP CONTROVERSY ON THE QUESTION ALL OVER AGAIN. I REPORTED TO HIM ON THE CONGRESSIONAL VIEWS AND THLD HIM THAT IN OUR COUNTRY WE COULD NOT CONTROL WHAT THE PRESS IS REPORTING OR SPECULATING ON THE SUBJECT. THE SIGNIFICANT FACTOR WAS THAT WE HAD STOOD BY OUR PART OF THE BARGAIN. WE ARE SURE THE IMPACT OF THESE STATEMENTS WILL DIE DOWN AND IN FACT IT IS MY PERSONAL ASSESSMENT THE PROCESS OF COOLING HAS ALREADY BEGUN. IMPORTANT THING THING IS THAT

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WE MUTALLY RESTRAIN OURSELVES IN PUBLIC STATEMENTS. WITH THIS

PROCESS AS THE LIKELY EVOLUTION OF OUR PRESENT POSITION, IT IS NOT IN ANY ONE'S INTEREST TO KEEP THE ISSUE ALIVE; THIS IS TRUE AS MUCH FOR JORDAN AS FOR THE UNITED STATES.

3. THIS OPERATING THESIS APPLIES AS MUCH TO INSPIRED STORIES IN JORDAN PRESS ABOUT WHICH WE HAD TALKED EARLIER, WHETHER OR NOT THEY ARE JORDANIAN OFFICIAL STATEMENTS IN ANY WAY. WE MOST STRONGLY URGE A RECONSIDERATION OF THIS TACTIC ON JORDAN'S PART. SOONER OR LATER THESE STORIES WILL STOP AND IT IS IN OUR MUTAL INTEREST TO GET THEM STOPPED AS SOON AS WE CAN. SPEAKING UP NOW CAN ONLY ADD TO THE PROBLEM. WHATEVER HAPPENS HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE IT IS OF SALIENT IMPORTANT THAT THERE BE NO FURTHER STATEMENTS

FROM THE JORDAN GOVERNMENT ON THIS POINT. I ADDED THAT I KNEW OF NO STATEMENTS NOW WHICH WE WERE PLANNING TO MAKE.

4. RIFAI REPLIED THAT HE PLANNED NO STATMENTS FROM THE GOVERNMENT. WE COULD BE SURE, AS HE TOLD US, THAT JORDAN WOULD NOT DO THAT. HOWEVER, HE HAD BEEN SUBJECTED TO A BARRAGE OF CONCERN LOCALLY TODAY OVER THE EXTENSIVE PRESS REPORTING FROM THE US MOST OF IT AS HE TOLD ME EARLIER RELAYED HERE BY THE WIRE SERVICES. IN WAS INCUMBENT UPON HIM TO DO SOMETHING IN ORDER TO AVOID, THE NOW UNAVOIDABLE APPEARANCE LOCALLY OF APPEARING TO HAVE MADE A STATEMENT LAST WEEK AND THEN JUST WITHDRAWN. THE STORY WOULD APPEAR IN ONLY ONE NEWSPAPER AND HAD NOW BEEN WRITTEN, AND SET IN TYPE AND PROBABLY PRINTED AND HE DID NOT SEE HOW HE COULD CHANGE IT.

5. QAAHEN SAID THAT AFTER WE TALKED EARLIER HE HAD GAIN REVIEWED WHAT WOULD BE SAID, IN THE STORY. HE SAID THAT NOTHING IN THE STORY WOULD TOUCH ON THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER. IT JUST INDICATED THAT JORDAN EXPECTED TO SIGN A STANDARD CONTRACT WITH THE UNITED STATES. THE STORY WOULD BE AS HE NOTED EARLIER ON A "IT HAS BEEN LEARNED" BASIS. I ASKED HIM AGAIN IN LIGHT OF THE MESSAGES AND CONERIN IN WASHINGTON ON THIS STORY IF IT COULD BE KILLED NOW. HE SAID HE JUST COULD NOT DO THAT. HE HAD TO TAKE THIS MINIMUM STEP FOR LOCAL REASONS ONLY. AFTER ALL WE COULD EXPLAIN TO THOSE CONCERNED IN THE UNITED STATES, IF WE HAD TO, THAT PRESS IN JORDAN IS ALSO NOT SUBJECT TO CONTROL WITH REGARD TO REPORTS AND SPECULATION. HE ALSO SAID, IN RESPONSE TO MY URGING TO DO ALL POSSIBLE TO CUT DOWN THIS TRADING OF STORIES THAT HE WOULD KEEP IT OFF OF THE

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OFFICIAL WIRE SERVICE AND TELEVISION HERE AND THAT THE RADIO WOULD ONLY COVER IT ONCE IN A REGULAR PROGRAM WHICH REVIEWS THE LOCAL PRESS IN THE EARLY MORNING AND THEN DIRECT REPEAT OF STORY IN THE LOCAL PRESS. HE SAID HE FELT THIS WAS A MAXIMUM HE COULD DO TO MEET OUR REQUEST CONSISTENT WITH THEIR OWN LOCAL POSITION ON ONE HAND AND OUR MUTAL CONCERN ABOUT KEEPING DOWN COMMENT ON THE OTHER. PICKERING

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